Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An infinitely variable directional valve comprising a valve body through which the connection from an inlet port to a discharge port can be controlled to be opened and comprising a blocking means for a substantially leakage-free shut-off of the inlet, the blocking means being designed to include a pilot control device, ~~characterized in that~~wherein the valve body is embodied as a seat slide and includes a closing cone which is prestressed counter to a valve seat, wherein the seat slide is separate from a control spring prior to energizing of a proportional magnet, ~~and that~~wherein the seat slide has a control edge by which the connection between the inlet and the discharge can be controlled to be opened in a directional control valve function, wherein in the closing cone a pilot control valve seat is formed counter to which a pilot control valve body is prestressed, wherein the pilot control valve body is adapted to be lifted off the pilot control valve seat by energizing the proportional magnet in order to perform pressure compensation at the seat slide, and in that the seat slide is adapted to be driven by the pilot control valve body so as to raise the closing cone from the valve seat.

2. (Previously Presented) A directional valve according to claim 1, wherein the pilot control valve body can be lifted off the pilot control valve seat in the closing position of the closing cone.

3. (Previously Presented) A directional valve according to claim 1, wherein the pilot control valve cone is guided outside the seat slide.

4. (Previously Presented) A directional valve according to claim 2, wherein after a predetermined stroke the pilot control valve body abuts against a driving shoulder of the seat slide so that the latter is movable into its directional control valve position.

5. (Previously Presented) A directional valve according to claim 1, wherein the seat slide comprises a control collar including control notches which is arranged at a distance from the closing cone and through which an axial bore is passed which is stepped back to a pilot control valve seat in the area of the closing cone.

6. (Previously Presented) A directional valve according to claim 5, wherein the closing cone and the control collar confine, in axial direction, an overflow chamber which is connected to the axial bore by means of at least one jacket bore of the seat slide.

7. (Previously Presented) A directional valve according to claim 5, comprising a proportional magnet the tappet of which is connected to the pilot control valve body.

8. (Previously Presented) A directional valve according to claim 7, wherein the proportional magnet is a drawing magnet.

9. (Previously Presented) A directional valve according to claim 7, wherein the seat slide includes an engaging dog in which the end portion of the pilot control valve cone or of the tappet on the side of the valve seat engages, wherein in an initial position a rear wall of the engaging dog forming the driving shoulder is formed at a distance corresponding to the initial stroke from an annular shoulder of the pilot control valve cone and of the tappet, respectively.

10. (Currently Amended) A directional valve according to claim 1, wherein the seat slide abuts against the~~a~~ control spring after a predetermined stroke.

11. (Previously Presented) A directional valve according to claim 10, wherein the end of the control spring on the side of the seat slide is supported on a valve spring retainer against which the seat slide abuts after the stroke.

12. (Previously Presented) A directional valve according to claim 1, wherein the pilot control valve cone is prestressed in the direction of the seat slide via a tracking spring.